Approved for Release: 2018/08/14 C06743107

CIA/CR 83-16404 M

(b)(1)
(b)(3)

Rafael FLORES LIMA **EL SALVADOR**
(Phonetic: FLOHrace LEEmah)

Deputy Minister of Defense
(since February 1983)

Addressed as:
General Flores Lima

Ambitious and politically astute, Gen. Rafael Flores Lima is a survivor who has managed to maintain and often improve his position in the military (b)(1) (b)(3) A press secretary to President (1977-79) Carlos Humberto Romero, Flores Lima was one of the few military officers in that administration who were permitted to have a role in the government that succeeded it. In December 1980 he was assigned as Chief of the Armed Forces General Staff after serving for a year as a military attache in Peru; he remained Chief of Staff until receiving his current post. He was widely considered to owe his assignment as Chief of Staff to then Minister of Defense José Guillermo García and to have been "García's man" in that position (b)(1) (b)(3) when it became apparent that García was losing political and military support and was on his way out, Flores Lima began distancing himself from the Minister and saying that he disagreed with many of García's policies (b)(1) (b)(3) current President Alvaro Magaña likes and respects Flores Lima, but there has been varied opinion about him in the military—some officers say he is one of the few senior officers who received their positions through competence instead of cronyism; others say he is dangerous because his only loyalty is to himself (b)(1) (b)(3) there have been frequent rumors that Flores Lima would not keep his present post for long, in April 1983 he was retained by the then new Defense Minister Eugenio Vides Casanova, who promoted him to general a few months later (b)(1) (b)(3)

A Political Moderate

(b)(1) (b)(3) Flores Lima has proved to be a moderating influence within the Salvadoran military: he has tried hard to make the military a more professional, less repressive, and less political institution than it has been in the past. For example, before the March 1982 elections he publicly urged that members of the military be prohibited from voting in order to demonstrate that the military was apolitical; he has since recanted that position, saying that (even though military voting was not absolutely prohibited in that election) confusion in the military ranks over whether to vote led to an inconclusive result (b)(1) (b)(3) he now believes members of the military should vote in the general elections scheduled for March 1984 (b)(1) (b)(3) Flores Lima supports agrarian reform and has told them that the reforms so far implemented would not have been possible without the Army's backing (b)(3)

(b)(1) (b)(3) A strong anti-Communist, Flores Lima has told that the Salvadoran guerrillas would be hurt most by a US military strike against the Marxist-Leninist Government of Nicaragua (b)(1) (b)(3) he might support a

(b)(3)

(b)(1)
(b)(3)

2-

Approved for Release: 2018/08/14 C06743107

Approved for Release: 2018/08/14 C06743107

[redacted]

(b)(1)
(b)(3)

negotiated end to the war in El Salvador if the settlement did not provide for power sharing with the insurgents. [redacted] he was concerned more about the threat to his country from the National Republican Alliance of ultrarightist Roberto D'Aubuisson than about the guerrillas. [redacted]

(b)(1)
(b)(3)
(b)(3)

Career and Personal Data

Flores Lima entered the Army in 1955 and was subsequently assigned to the artillery branch. He has received training at the Mexican Superior War College (1968-71), and he has attended public safety (1967) and military intelligence (1977) courses in the United States. Most of his military experience has been in staff positions. [redacted]

(b)(3)

An excellent speaker, Flores Lima knows how to reach and motivate an audience, [redacted]

(b)(1)
(b)(3)

Flores Lima, 48, [redacted] Married to the former María Teresa Guangique Esquivel, he has two sons and two daughters. [redacted]

(b)(3)

2 December 1983

[redacted]

(b)(1)
(b)(3)

Approved for Release: 2018/08/14 C06743107